



# The Riverman

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Stewart  
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(Continued.)

"Got the money?" he asked.  
"Have you?" countered Orde.  
The man nodded. "I'll go you, huh,"  
said he. "Lay out your money."  
Orde counted out nine fifty-dollar  
bills and five tens.  
"All right," said the gambler, taking  
up the cards.  
"Hold on!" cried Orde. "Where's  
your's?"

"Oh, that's all right," the gambler  
reassured him. "I'm with the house.  
McNeill's credit is good."  
"I'm putting up my good money, and  
I expect to see good money put up in  
return," said Orde.  
Finally the gamblers yielded and put  
up the money.

The audience now consisted of the  
dozen of Orde's friends, nearly twice  
as many rivermen, eight gamblers on  
of the joint, probably fighters and  
"bouncers," half a dozen professional  
gamblers and several waitresses. The  
four barkeepers still held their positions.  
The rivermen were scattered about  
back of Orde, although Orde's own  
friends had gathered at his shoulder.  
The gamblers and gamblers had di-  
vided and looked the table at either  
side. Newman, a growing wonder  
and dapper dresser, in his usually  
unobtrusive way, recognized the strate-  
gical advantage of this arrangement.  
A determined push would separate  
the rivermen from the gamblers long  
enough for the latter to disappear  
through the small door at the back.

A gasp of anticipation went up as  
Orde played his great red fist on one  
of the cards.

"That is the jack," he cried.  
"Oh, is it?" sneered the dealer.  
"Well, turn it over and let's see."  
"Not," barked Orde. "You turn over  
the other two."

A big grin broke from the gambler,  
and his face contorted in a spasm.  
For a moment the situation was tense  
and threatening. The dealer, with a  
sweeping glance again searched the  
faces of those before him. In that  
moment probably he made up his  
mind that an open scandal must be  
avoided. Force and broken bones,  
even murder, might be all right enough  
under color of right. If Orde had  
turned up for a jack the card on  
which he now held his fist and then  
had attempted to prove cheating a cry  
of robbery and a lively fight would  
have given opportunity for making  
way with the stakes. But McNeill's  
card had not been shown up before  
the thirty interested rivermen as run-  
ning an open and shut game.

"That isn't the way this game is  
played," said the gambler. "Show up  
your jack."

"It's the way I play it," replied  
Orde sternly. "These gentlemen heard  
the bet." He reached over and dex-  
terously flipped over the other two  
cards. "You see, neither of these is  
the jack. This must be."  
"You win," assented the gambler  
after a pause.

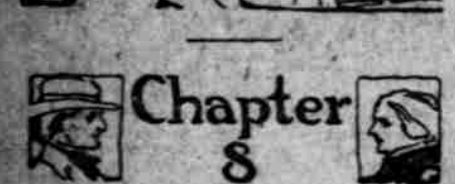
Orde, his fist still on the third card,  
began pocketing the stakes with the  
other hand. The gambler reached  
across the table.

"Give me the other card," said he.  
Orde picked it up, laughing. For a  
moment he seemed to hesitate, hold-  
ing the bit of ivory in his hand, in-  
stinctively, as though he was going  
to turn also this one face up. Then  
quite deliberately he handed the card  
to the gambler.

"All to the bar!" yelled Orde.  
Orde poured his drink on the floor  
and took the glass belonging to the  
man next him.

"Let them to give you another.  
Tim," said he. "No knockout drops if  
I can help it."

"Tim," said Orde, low voiced, "get  
the crowd together and we'll pull out.  
I've a thousand dollars on me, and  
they'll stand me sure if I go alone.  
And let's get out right off."



**Chapter 8**  
JACK ORDE was the youngest and  
most energetic of a large family  
that had long since scattered to  
diverse cities and industries. He  
and Grandma and Grandma Orde dwelt  
now in the big, echoing, old fashioned  
house alone save for one maid. Grand-  
ma Orde, now above sixty, was tall,  
straight, slender. His hair was white  
and worn a little long. His feet  
were finely shod. Grandma Orde  
had been a mighty breaker of the  
wilderness, but his time had passed,  
and he had fallen upon somewhat  
straitened ways. Grandma Orde, on  
the other hand, was a very usual,  
spry old lady, with a small face,  
small figure, small hands and feet.  
She dressed in the then usual cap  
and black silk of old ladies. Half her  
time she spent at her housekeeping,  
which she loved, jangling about from  
cellar to attic storehouse, seeing that  
Amanda, the maid, had everything in  
order.

To these people Orde came direct  
from the greatness of the wilderness  
and the ferocity of Hell's Half Mile.  
Such contrasts were possible even ten  
or fifteen years ago. The untamed  
country lay at the doors of the most  
modern civilization.  
Newmark, reappearing one Sunday  
afternoon at the end of the two weeks,

was apparently bothered. He exam-  
ined the Orde place for some moments,  
walked on beyond it. Finding nothing  
there, he returned and after some hesi-  
tation turned in up the tar sidewalk  
and pulled at the old fashioned wire  
bell pull. Grandma Orde herself an-  
swered the door.

Newmark took off his gray felt hat.  
"Will you kindly tell me where Mr.  
Orde lives?"

"This is Mr. Orde's," replied the lit-  
tle old lady.  
"Pardon me," persisted Newmark.  
"I am looking for Mr. Jack Orde. I  
am sorry to have troubled you."

"Mr. Jack Orde lives here," returned  
Grandma Orde. "He is my son. Would  
you like to see him?"

"If you please," assented Newmark  
gravely, his thin, shrewd face masking  
itself with its usual expression of  
quizzical cynicism.  
Newmark entered the cool, dusky in-  
terior and was shown to the left into a  
dim, long room. He perched on a ma-  
hogony chair and had time to notice a  
bookcase with a white owl atop, an old  
piano with the yellowing keys, half-  
cloth sofa and chairs, steel engravings  
and two oil portraits when Orde ap-  
peared.

Newmark had known Orde only as  
riverman. Like most easterners, he  
was unable to imagine a man in rough  
clothes as being anything but a rough  
man. The figure he saw before him  
was correctly dressed in what was  
then the proper Sunday costume.

"Oh, it's you, Mr. Newmark," cried  
Orde. "I'm glad to see you." He led  
the way into the hall and to another  
brighter room, in which Grandma  
Orde sat, a canary singing above her  
head.

"Mother," said Orde, "this is Mr.  
Newmark, who was with us on the  
drive this spring."

"Mr. Newmark and I spoke at the  
door," said she, extending her frail  
hand.



"I'd like to see you get any three men to  
agree to anything on this river."

hand with dignity. "If you were on  
the drive, Mr. Newmark, you must  
have been one of the high privates in  
this dreadful war we all read about."

Newmark laughed. At Orde's sug-  
gestion the two passed back into the  
remains of the old orchard.

"Where have you been for the last  
couple of weeks?" asked Orde.

"I caught Johnson's drive and went  
on down river with him to the lake. I  
don't like the life at all, but the drive  
interested me. It interested me so  
much that I've come back to talk to  
you about it. I'm going to ask you a  
few questions about yourself."

"How old are you?" inquired New-  
mark abruptly.  
"Thirty."

"How long have you been log driv-  
ing?"

"About six years."

"Why did you go into it?"

"Because there's nothing ahead of  
shoveling dirt." Orde replied, with a  
quaint grin.

"I see," said Newmark after a pause.  
"Then you think there's more future  
to that sort of thing than the sort of  
thing the rest of your friends go in  
for—law and wholesale groceries and  
banking and the rest of it?"

"There is for me," replied Orde sim-  
ply.  
"Yet you're merely river driving on  
a salary at thirty?"

Orde flushed slowly and shifted his  
position.

"I'm not asking all this out of idle  
curiosity. I've got a scheme in my  
head that I think may work out big  
for us both."

"Well," assented Orde reservedly, "in  
that case—I'm foreman on this drive  
because my outfit went kepunk two  
years ago, and I'm making a fresh go  
at it."

"Failed?" inquired Newmark.  
"Partner skeddaddled," replied Orde.  
"Now, suppose you tell me what the  
devil you're driving at."

"Look here," said Newmark, abrupt-  
ly changing the subject, "you know  
that rapids up river flanked by shal-  
lows, where the logs are always going  
around?"

"I do."

"Well, why wouldn't it help to put a  
string of piers down both sides, with  
booms between them to hold the logs  
in the deeper water?"

"It would," said Orde.  
"Why isn't it done, then?"

"Who would do it?" countered Orde.  
"If Dady did it, for instance, then all  
the rest of the drivers would get the  
advantage of it for nothing."

"Get them to pay their share."

Orde grinned. "I'd like to see you  
get any three men to agree to any-  
thing on this river."

"How many firms drive logs on this  
stream?"

"Ten," replied Orde without hesita-  
tion.

"How many do they employ?"

"About 500 men."

"Now, suppose—Newmark leaned  
forward—"suppose a firm should be  
organized to drive all the logs on the  
river. Suppose it improved the river

with piers and dams, so that the driv-  
ing would be easier. Couldn't it drive  
with less than 500 men and save money?"

"It might," agreed Orde.  
"If such a firm should be organized to  
drive the logs for these ten firms at  
so much a thousand, do you suppose it  
would get the business?"

"It would depend on the driving  
firm," said Orde. "You see, mill men  
have got to have their logs. They  
can't afford to take chances. It would  
not pay."

"Then that's all right," agreed New-  
mark, with a gleam of satisfaction  
across his thin face. "Would you  
form a partnership with me having  
such an object in view?"

Orde laughed.  
"I guess you don't realize the situa-  
tion," said he. "We'd have to have a  
few little things like distributing  
booms and tugs and a lot of tools and  
supplies and works of various kinds."

"Well, we'd get them."

"How much are you worth?" Orde  
inquired bluntly.

"Twenty thousand dollars. How  
much capital would we have to have?"  
asked Newmark.

Orde thought for several minutes.  
"We would need somewhere near  
\$75,000," he estimated at last.

"That's easy," cried Newmark.  
"We'll make a stock company—say  
100,000 shares. We'll keep just enough  
between us to control the company—  
say 51,000. I'll put in my pile, and you  
can pay for yours out of the earnings  
of the company."

"That doesn't sound fair."

"You pay interest," explained New-  
mark. "Then we'll sell the rest of the  
stock to raise the rest of the money."

"I must have something to live on,"  
said Orde thoughtfully at last.

"So must I," said Newmark. "We'll  
have to pay ourselves salaries, of  
course, but the smaller the better at  
first. You'll have to take charge of the  
men and the work and all the rest of  
it. I don't know anything about that.  
I'll attend to the incorporating and the  
routine, and I'll try to place the stock.  
You'll have to see first of all whether  
you can get contracts from the logging  
firms to drive the logs."

"How can I tell what to charge them?"

"We'll have to figure that very close-  
ly. You know where these different  
drives would start from and how long  
each of them would take?"

"Oh, yes."

"Well, then we'll figure how many  
days' driving there is for each, and  
how many men there are, and what it  
costs for wages, grub, tools. We'll just  
have to figure as near as we can to the  
actual cost and then add a margin for  
profit and for interest on our invest-  
ment."

Amanda now announced dinner.  
Newmark looked puzzled and as he  
arose glanced surreptitiously at his  
watch. Orde seemed to take the sum-  
mons as one to be expected, however.

In fact, the strange hour was the  
usual Sunday custom in the household  
of that day and had to do with the  
late church freedom of Amanda and  
her like.

"Come in and eat with us," invited  
Orde.  
But Newmark declined.

"Come up tomorrow night, then, at  
half past 6 for supper," Orde urged  
him. "We can figure on these things  
a little."

Every Sunday Jane Hubbard offered  
to all who came a "Sunday night  
lunch," and the refreshments were  
served by the guests themselves.

Orde found about the usual crowd  
gathered. Jane herself, tall, deliberate  
in movement and in speech, kindly  
and thoughtful, talked in a corner  
with Ernest Colburn, who was just  
out of college and who worked in a  
bank. Orde, standing in the doorway,  
looked upon quite the usual thing,  
only he missed the incubus. Search-  
ing the room with his eyes, he at  
length discovered that incoherent, dog-  
ged, but persistent youth vis-a-vis  
with a stranger. Orde made out the  
white of her gown in the shadows, the  
willowy outline of her small and slender  
figure and the gracious forward  
bend of her head.

"So you're back at last, are you,  
Jack?" drawled Jane in her lazy, good  
natured way. "Come and meet Miss  
Bishop. Carroll, I want to present Mr.  
Orde."

Orde bowed ceremoniously. The girl  
inclined gracefully her small head  
with the glossy hair. The incubus,  
his salient face twisted in a wry  
smile, held to the edge of his chair  
with characteristic pertinacity.

"Well, Walter," Orde addressed him  
generally, "are you having a good  
time?"

"Yes, indeed!"

His chair was planted squarely to  
exclude all others. Orde surveyed the  
situation with good humor.

"Going to keep the other fellow from  
getting a chance, I see."

"Yes, indeed!"

Orde bent over and, with great ease,  
lifted incubus, chair and all, and set  
him facing Mignonne Smith and the  
croquet ball.

"Here, Mignonne," said he, "I've  
brought you another assistant."

He returned to the lamp to find the  
girl, her dark eyes alight with amuse-  
ment, watching him intently.

"Walter is a very bright man in his  
own line," said Orde, swinging for-  
ward a chair, "but he mustn't be al-  
lowed any monopolies."

"How do you know I want him so  
summarily removed?" the girl asked  
him.

"Well," argued Orde, "I got him to  
say all he ever says to any girl. 'Yes,  
indeed!' so you couldn't have any more  
conversation from him. Besides, I  
want to talk to you myself."

"Do you always get what you want?"  
inquired the girl.

"I get what I want," said Orde, "but  
I don't always get what you want."

"I don't want anything," said the girl,  
"but I want to know what you want."

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